DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 253 285 JC 850 058

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TITLE Major National Societal Trends Likely to Affect the Marin Community Colleges through the Year 2000. Societal Factors Affecting Education.
PUB DATE Aug 84
NOTE 31p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Planning; Community Colleges; *Educational Trends; *Futures (of Society); *Sociocultural Patterns; Trend Analysis; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Economic Influences

ABSTRACT

Societal trends likely to affect the Marin Community Colleges (MCC) through the year 2000 are examined in this study of college planning for the next 5 years. Following information on the background, significance, and procedures of the study, a review is presented of six publications, selected for their particular relevance to the community college field, which identify more than 50 major national demographic, economic, political, social, and technological trends. Results are organized and discussed in six categories, based on the nature of the trends and the timelines over which they were projected: (1) demographic projections through the 1980's; (2) demographic projections through the year 2050; (3) economic projections through the year 2000; (4) political projections; (5) social projections; and (6) technological projections through the year 2000. Next, ways in which these findings relate to the planning assumptions in MCC's master plan are discussed, in the areas of staff and program development; basic skills, critical literacy, and computer usage; business and professional training; planning and evaluation; financial stability; support services; and access. Finally, recommendations for improving MCC's planning processes are made. (LAL)

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MAJOR NATIONAL SOCIETAL TRENDS LIKELY TO AFFECT THE MARIN COMMUNITY COLLEGES THROUGH THE YEAR 2000

SOCIETAL FACTORS AFFECTING EDUCATION

by

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Marin Community College District

A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

NOVA UNIVERSITY

AUGUST, 1984

JC 850 058

ABSTRACT

In the early 1980s, The Marin Community Colleges were experiencing rapid social change yet had no strategic plan for responding to those changes. Prior to the development of a plan, they needed to identify societal trends likely to affect them during the next five years and through the year 2000. The purpose of this study was to provide information regarding major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000. The results of the study were used by The Marin Community Colleges' Planning Task Force as a context within which to view the next five years and as part of the basis upon which the Colleges' planning assumptions were developed. The planning assumptions then became the basis upon which The Colleges' five-year action strategies were developed.

Information regarding major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000 was gained by studying six books, articles, and reports which were abstracted in the Future Survey Index. They were selected according to specific criteria. A report was prepared and distributed to the Planning Task Force which described the trends identified in the study.

The procedures of the study resulted in the identification of more than fifty major national societal trends in five major categories: demographic, economic, political, social, and technological projections. It was recommended that The Marin Community Colleges reconvene the Planning Task Force to consider additional planning assumptions based on the results of the study.

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INTRODUCTION

Community colleges in the 1980s are being affected by a variety of changing societal factors: demographic, economic, political, social, and technological. Some community colleges are responding to these changes by modifying their programs and services to better fit the educational needs of today's society. But societal changes are coming so rapidly, and educational responses so slowly, that community colleges need not only to respond to today's society, they need to be able to project the society of the future. Otherwise, community college decision makers will lack sufficient information and lead time for making educational decisions today which will assure community colleges a place of importance in tomorrow's society.

The purpose of this study was to provide information regarding major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000. The results of the study were used to develop one of four sections of a chapter--Projection of Characteristics and Needs--in The Marin Community Colleges' first Master Plan. The section of the chapter which was based on the results of the study--National Trends--helped the Colleges focus on the long-range future as a context within which to view the next five years. All four sections of the chapter provided information upon which The Marin Community Colleges' Planning Task Force based its planning assumptions. The planning assumptions then became the basis upon which the Colleges' five-year action strategies were developed. To illustrate the major components of the Master Plan and how the section on National Trends contributed to

the chapter on Projection of Characteristics and Needs, the table of contents of the Master Plan is appended as Appendix A.

The study was conducted by reviewing the most recent issues of the Future Survey Index, a monthly abstract of books, articles, and reports concerning forecasts, trends, and ideas about the future. Relevant books, articles, and reports were selected for study to aid in the identification of major national societal trends according to specific criteria. A report was prepared which described the trends identified in the study. The report was presented to The Marin Community Colleges' Planning Task Force for discussion of the implications of the trends identified and to provide a long-range perspective within which Community and College Trends, Enrollment Potential, and Major External and Internal Needs were identified. See Appendix B.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

In 1980, the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies reported the major factors which had influenced higher education during the 1960s and 1970s, and the difficulty which higher education would experience as it attempted to anticipate the future environment.

> The great external forces in the last two decades were the domestic consequences of Sputnik, the "tidal wave" of students that followed on the "baby boom" after World War II, the new affluence, the civil rights revolution, the war in Vietnam, and the student movement reflecting the impact of the latter two. Only one of these--the tidal wave of students--was seen in advance (1980:84-5).

The Council reported that "only one great new force in the forthcoming two decades can now be identified: the demographic depression for higher education." (1980:85) Yet it is clear that, as in the past, other external forces will affect higher education and its ability to

respond to, or shape society. Educational leaders are beginning to recognize the need to identify these major forces in their attempts to better plan for the future.

Schmidt, Klapstein, and Jensen asserted that planning for social and educational change was one of the most critical needs of contemporary community colleges in a highly paced society (1979:22). In April of 1982, LeCroy and Shaw presented a paper at the annual convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges which addressed emerging problems of community colleges. Among the most important skills identified for community college leaders of tomorrow was the ability to plan strategically for long-term benefits and goals.

> No one of us, regardless of our skills, our preparation, our vision, or our charisma, will be able to alter the environment in which our colleges must function during the coming decades. But we can play an important part in assuring that the community college remain a reasonably healthy institution in a changing context (1982:3).

In the early 1980s, The Marin Community Colleges, two suburban, comprehensive community colleges in Marin County, California, were experiencing rapid social change. According to the Colleges' Planning Task Force, while transfer programs continued to be important, programs for older adults, especially retraining programs to update workers in new technologies, were growing in importance (1983:8). The Task Force identified other local changes: that Marin County was developing into a software center for the region, possibly the nation; that there was a great demand for personal enrichment and self-satisfaction classes that might be viewed as luxury classes elsewhere; and that, while the community tended to have a liberal image, it tended to vote conservatively (1983:1-100).

To help decision makers make decisions today which might assure

The Marin Community Colleges a place of importance in tomorrow's society, the Colleges developed their first strategic or Master Plan. The purpose of the plan was to help the Colleges focus on the future and, then, to develop five-year action strategies based on their best guess about that future.

The Planning Task Force was composed of the Chancellor, the Vice President of Educational Services, the Vice President for Operations, the Dean of Community Education and Services, the Director of Public Affairs and Development, the President of College of Marin, and the President of Indian Valley Colleges. The composition of the Task Force was modified during the planning process to reflect a new organizational structure; the position of the Chancellor was eliminated and other changes were made to reflect a single Districtwide administration. However, the composition of the Task Force included all those positions which reported directly to the chief executive officer of the District.

The Planning Task Force determined that, prior to developing five-year action strategies, it needed to accomplish four major tasks: (1) assess the environment or society in which the Colleges currently functioned, (2) project the characteristics and needs of the environment or society and the Colleges, (3) develop planning assumptions about the future based on an analysis of the projected characteristics and needs, and (4) review and, if necessary, revise the Colleges' statement of mission and goals. The results of these four major tasks, which were achieved in the order given, provided the context within which the Colleges' action strategies for the next five years were developed.

The Planning Task Force was responsible for coordinating the

accomplishment of the four major tasks which were preliminary to the development of the action strategies. Each of the four major tasks was addressed in a number of sub-tasks. To address the major task of projecting the characteristics and needs of the environment or society and the Colleges, four sub-tasks were identified: (1) to identify the major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000, (2) to project five-year community and college trends, (3) to project five-year enrollment potential, and (4) to project five-year major external and internal needs.

A review of the literature revealed that no community college had compiled comprehensive information about projections of major national societal trends likely to affect community colleges through the year 2000. The seminar on Societal Factors Affecting Education was useful in providing information about current trends. The Planning Task Force wanted to identify trends which were likely to affect the Colleges through the year 2000.

In 1981, Groff (1981:1-30) proposed that colleges and universities work together in an ongoing Trend and Environmental Impact Analysis Program which would diagnose national, state, and regional socioeconomic trends and specify institutional responses to those trends. In 1982, Groff (1982:9) reiterated the need for colleges and universities to find some way to monitor demographic, economic, and governmental forces in society so that they could develop visions and scenarios of possible alternative futures for their institutions. He identified trend analysis as one way of monitoring major societal trends.

While many community colleges are recognizing the need to plan strategically for the future, typically they identify only regional

and local trends which will affect them during the next three to five years. The Marin Community Colleges identified an additional need for a broad and long-range perspective as a context within which localized short-range planning took place. This study was significant to The Marin Community Colleges because it provided information about major national societal trends which were likely to affect community colleges in general, and The Marin Community Colleges in particular, through the year 2000. This resulted in a strategic plan for The Marin Community Colleges which was intended to be more broadly informed and less subject to shortsightedness and provincialism. The study was appropriate to the seminar on Societal Factors Affecting Education because it addressed societal factors which were projected through the year 2000.

PROCEDURES

The purpose of the study was to provide information regarding major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000. The procedures of the study included four steps. In the first step, the twenty-four most recent issues of the Future Survey Index were reviewed to identify recently-published books, articles, and reports concerning forecasts, trends, and ideas about the future. In the second step, six books, articles, and reports were selected for further study when they met five criteria, those criteria being that the books, articles, and reports appeared to discuss trends which were: (1) major, (2) national, (3) projected into the future, (4) judged likely to affect community colleges, and (5) projected by a method which was identified in the literature and based on more than one person's opinion. In the third step, the six

selections were studied in their entirety and specific trends were identified. In the fourth step, a report was prepared and distributed to the Planning Task Force which described the trends identified in the study.

The research materials which were selected for study in identifying major national societal trends, and the methodology used by the authors in making the projections, were: (1) Cetron and O'Toole's Encounters With the Future: A Forecast of Life into the 21st Century, with the authors projecting trends by analysis and synthesis of data and extensive use of computers at Forecasting International; (2) Long and DeAre's "Repopulating the Countryside: A 1980 Census Trend," with the authors projecting trends by analysis of 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census data; (3) Naisbitt's Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives, with the author projecting trends by content analysis of 6000 local newspapers over a period of twelve years, with special emphasis on the bellwether states of California, Florida, Washington, Colorado, and Connecticut; (4) Pear's "Population Drop Predicted in U.S.," with the author projecting trends by analysis of 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census data; (5) Population Reference Bureau and Guest Experts' "U.S. Population: Where We Are; Where We're Going," with a panel of experts projecting trends by analysis of 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census data; and (6) Yankelovich's "New Rules in American Life: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down," with the author projecting trends from opinion surveys conducted over a period of forty-four years by the Gallup Opinion Index, NORC at The University of Chicago, the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, The Roper Organization, the firm of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc. and

Harris Survey.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to reporting on information about major national societal trends which were described in six books, articles, and reports. Given this limitation, it is possible that a number of important major national societal trends were omitted from the study. However, it is likely that the literature studied was sufficiently inclusive for purposes of this study since it resulted in the identification of more than fifty trends in five broad categories.

Assumptions of the Study

It was assumed that the Planning Task Force would discuss the implications of the trends identified as it developed shorter-range planning assumptions, and that these implications would be reflected in the stated assumptions. It also was assumed that the principal author/editor of the Master Plan document would exercise good judgment in extracting information from the report produced by the study, for inclusion in the National Trends section of the chapter on Projection of Characteristics and Needs.

RESULTS

The procedures of the study resulted in the identification of more than fifty major national societal trends likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000. Given the nature of the trends and the timeline over which they were projected by the authors, they were organized into six categories: (1) demographic projections

through the 1980s, (2) demographic projections through the year 2050, (3) economic projections through the year 2000, (4) political projections, (5) social projections, and (6) technological projections through the year 2000. Those trends which were extracted from the report produced by the study and includ d in the National Trends section of the chapter on Projection of Characteristics and Needs have been underlined in the six sections which follow.

Demographic Projections Through the 1980s

Long and DeAre (1982) projected a new shift toward rural lifestyles. The Population Reference Bureau and Guest Experts (1982) projected twelve trends: (1) a small increase in the 0-14 age groups, a drop in the 15-29 age group, a sharp increase in the group aged 30-44, a decline in numbers of persons aged 55-64, and a moderate increase in the number of elderly, aged 65 and over; (2) a continuation of the decline in mortality, reflecting the combined effects of changes in life style--improved diets, more exercise, less smoking, etc.--and increased access to medical screening and care; (3) a decrease in mean household size from 2.76 in 1980 to 2.47 in 1990, primarily due to fewer children under age 18; (4) that eight to ten percent of women now in their twenties would never marry; (5) a continuation of the rise of annual divorces during the 1980s; (6) a doubling of the percentage of unmarried couples, from 3.5 percent in 1981 to 7 percent in 1990; (7) a drop from 20 percent to 16-17 percent in the 1980s in the proportion of people changing households in a year; (8) a continued shift in population to the South and West, but not as accelerated as it was in the 1970s; (9) resort-retirement growth and suburbanization would account

for most population-boom areas; (10) a continuation of the net flow of migration from urban areas to small towns and rural areas; (11) an increase in the Hispanic population which, by 1990, would comprise a significant minority of 10 percent; and (2) that immigration would have a major impact on U.S. population during the 1980s in that net immigration would range from three-quarters of a million to almost one million a year.

Demographic Projections Through the Year 2050

Pear (1982) projected five trends: (1) that the U.S. would reach zero population growth in 2050, when population would reach a high of 309 million and then start to decline; (2) a doubling of the percentage of people 65 years of age and older, from 11.4 percent of the population in 1981 to 21.7% of the population in 2050; (3) an increase in the life expectancy for men, from 71 years of age in 1981 to 75 years of age in 2050; (4) an increase in the life expectancy for women, from 78 years of age in 1981 to 83.6 years of age in 2050; and (5) an increase in the non-white population, from 14.4 percent in 1981 to 23 percent in 2050.

Economic Projections Through the Year 2000

Cetron and O'Toole (1982) projected six trends: (1) an 8 percent annual inflation rate to the year 2000, with interest rates stabilizing at 11 percent; (2) no depression, partly because of the ongoing computer revolution that would exercise tight controls on money supply; (3) a decrease in taxes as stock prices went up and as America reindustrialized robot factories to raise productivity; (4) a decrease in the number of Americans living in poverty, as welfare reforms were

made in the years ahead; (5) no energy crisis as we began to generate nuclear electricity with fusion power; and (6) the continuation of a strong and stable United States, with a waning of Japanese influence due to a lack of natural resources. Naisbitt (1982) projected five economic trends: (1) a movement from an industrial society to an information society, where most occupations would involve the production and distribution of knowledge; (2) a movement from a national economy to an interdependent world economy; (3) a movement from a short-term orientation of managers to long-term planning; (4) a movement from centralization to decentralization in business; and (5) a movement from institutional help to self-employment. Yankelovich (1981) projected two economic trends: vast changes in the future in how paid work and child care were organized, and intense economic stress at least until the latter half of the 1980s.

Social Projections

Cetron and O'Toole (1982) projected that the majority of the population in the year 2000 would feel and look better, and live longer than they currently do. Naisbitt (1982) projected five social trends: (1) a movement from forced technology to high tech/high touch, where a counterbalancing human response--high touch--followed the production of high technology, balancing our physical and spiritual reality; (2) a movement from hierarchies to egalitarian networking for self-help and social change; (3) a movement from living in the old industrial cities of the North to the newer cities of the South and West; (4) a movement from an either/or society to multiple options: a Baskin-Robbins society of at least 31 flavors; and (5) a movement from institutional help to

self-help. Yankelovich (1981) projected four social trends: (1) today's parents expected to make fewer sacrifices for their children than parents did in the past, but they also demanded less from their offspring in the form of future obligations than their parents demanded from them; (2) a continuation of intense social conflict and confusion of signals in ethical changes at least until the latter half of the 1980s; (3) an evolution toward a new ethic of commitment, as contrasted to an historical ethic of self-denial and a current ethic of self-fulfillment; and (4) continuing attention to economic realities such as jobs, homes, food bills, and personal safety, through the 1980s.

Technological Projections Through the Year 2000

Cetron and O'Toole (1982) projected five technological trends: (1) a doubling in the cost of cars, but a halving of their weight, resulting in a doubling of mileage and durability; (2) nuclear desalting plants and glaciers towed from the Artic would solve much of the world's water shortages; (3) medical advances including medicines that improved and restored memory and staved off senility, pills that cured fear of heights and fear of flying, a "nutlike" snack to keep teeth strong and free of cavities, a hormone for control of growth and memory, medicines that cured addiction to drugs and alcohol, many diseases cured by gene splicing, an artificial liver, and artificial blood; (4) a checkless and cashless society, with teleshopping by two-way home television; and a space telephone which would tell us if the cosmos would go on expanding forever--a heavy cosmological answer which might alter religious thought.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study indicated that, based on a variety of methods used to project trends, major changes were projected to take place through the year 2000. However, an analysis of the planning assumptions included in The Marin Community Colleges' Master Plan indicated little, if any, relationship between the major national societal trends identified which were likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000, and the stated planning assumptions. As noted in the section on Assumptions of the Study, it was assumed that the Planning Task Force would discuss the implications of the trends identified as it developed shorter-range planning assumptions, and that these implications would be reflected in the stated assumptions. No such discussion took place.

The planning assumptions in the Master Plan were grouped into seven categories: (1) staff and program development; (2) basic skills, critical literacy, and computer usage; (3) business and professional training, (4) planning and evaluation; (5) financial stability; (6) support services; and (7) access. Since the results of the study were to be used in developing the planning assumptions, a discussion of the assumptions and their possible relationship to the results of the study will follow.

Staff and Program Development

Two of the four planning assumptions relating to staff and program development might be interpreted as related to the results of the study. These assumptions were that high technology and occupational classes were expected to be in high demand over the next five years and,

to maintain the Colleges' commitment to offering the most up-to-date academic programs, certain technological equipment would have to be purchased and maintained.

Based on the trends identified in the study, a number of other assumptions might have been developed which relate to staff and program development. For instance, given the demographic projections through the 1980s, the Planning Task Force might have assumed that new programs of interest to those aged 30-44 would need to be developed, as well as programs which would meet the needs of an increased Hispanic population. Given the demographic projections through the year 2050, the Planning Task Force might have assumed that new programs of interest to those aged 65 and older would need to be developed, as well as programs which would meet the needs of a non-white population.

Given the economic projections through the year 2000, the Planning Task Force might have assumed that new programs involving the production and distribution of knowledge would need to be developed, as well as new programs to help people become self-employed. Given the social projections, the Planning Task Force might have assumed that new programs or changes in existing programs would need to take place in order to accomodate a projected need for humanizing the technological curricula. It also might have assumed that students would demand more options, both in curricular offerings and in methods of delivery, and that they would be interested in pursuing programs which helped them evolve toward a new ethic of commitment, e.g., a local "Peace Corps" program.

Given the technological projections through the year 2000, the Planning Task Force might have assumed that telelearning by two-way

television would be possible, and that staff development programs in the use of television might be needed.

Basic Skills, Critical Literacy, and Computer Usage

One of the six planning assumptions related to basic skills, critical literacy, and computer usage might be interpreted as related to the results of the study. The assumption was that a countywide software library would be able to serve all local educational institutions. The social projection that people would network for self-help and social change might be related to the planning assumption.

Based on the trends identified in the study, a number of other assumptions might have been developed which relate to basic skills, critical literacy, and computer usage. For instance, the demographic projection that, by 1990, the Hispanic population would comprise a significant minority of ten percent might have led the Planning Task Force to assume that basic skills for those who have English as their second language might increase in demand.

Business and Professional Training

All four of the planning assumptions related to business and professional training might be interpreted as related to the results of the study. These assumptions were: (1) that the Colleges should anticipate greater demands in occupational, professional, and high technology programs over the next five years; (2) that there would be a growing demand for occupational training for the unemployed as well as retraining for those in rapidly changing occupations; (3) that there would be an increasing demand for on-the-job retraining or updating; and

(4) because of the nature of high technology, constant and brief training on specific advancements would be necessary. Based on one trend identified in the study, another assumption might have been developed which related to business and professional training. That is, a movement from a short-term orientation of managers to long-term planning might have led the Planning Task Force to assume that people in business and the professions would need to learn new skills in long-term planning.

Planning and Evaluation

All four of the planning assumptions related to planning and evaluation might be interpreted as related to the results of the study. These assumptions were: (1) a consistent organized method for planning academic disciplines was needed; (2) a coordinated county-wide educational planning and assessment office would be useful; (3) evaluation models for educational institutions should relate both qualitative and quantitative data; and (4) the allocation of resources should be linked to program evaluation. The trend from short-term to long-term planning by managers might be related to these four assumptions.

Financial Stability

None of the nine planning assumptions related to financial stability appear to be related to the results of the study. Based on the trends identified in the study, a number of other assumptions might have been developed. For instance, the economic projections through the year 2000--that there would be no depression and that there would be a decrease in the number of Americans living in poverty--might have led the Planning Task Force to assume that financial aid to students would

decrease and tuition increase as more students were able to assume a larger share of the costs of community college education.

Support Services

One of the five planning assumptions related to support services might be interpreted as related to the results of the study: with technology and employment patterns changing so rapidly, counseling would remain a high student priority. One trend identified in the study--a movement from an either/or society to multiple options--might have led the Planning Task Force to assume that students would demand a variety of registration options, e.g., registration by mail, 'phone, computer, or two-way television.

Access

Four of the seven planning assumptions related to access might be interpreted as related to the results of the study. These four assumptions were: (1) because Marin residents tend to be so mobile, traditional class times might be restrictive; (2) older adults, the handicapped, English as a second language students, women and minority students have special needs that might affect their ability to attend classes; (3) many students are unable to attend evening classes because they cannot afford to pay baby-sitters after having paid for childcare throughout the day; and (4) groups of residents in Marin City, the Canal area, and West Marin may not have geographic or socio-economic access to all the Colleges' programs and services.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that The Marin Community Colleges:

1. Continue to identify, on a regular basis, major national societal trends which are likely to affect The Marin Community Colleges through the year 2000;

2. Use the results of future studies to project societal characteristics and needs;

3. Once the societal characteristics and needs have been projected, involve the Planning Task Force--whatever its composition--in a session or sessions to develop planning assumptions based on the characteristics and needs projected. In this study, group sessions were not held which may have resulted in incomplete planning assumptions.

4. Continue to use the procedures of this study in the identification of major national societal trends. They resulted in the identification of more than fifty trends in five broad categories, a sufficiently broad and long-range perspective from which to help The Marin Community Colleges focus on the long-range future as a context within which to view each successive five-year period.

5. Reconvene a Planning Task Force to consider additional planning assumptions based on the results of this study:

a. That new programs of interest to those aged 30-44 might need to be developed or expanded;

b. That programs which meet the needs of an increased Hispanic population might need to be developed or expanded;

c. That new programs of interest to those aged 65 and older might need to be developed or expanded;

d. That new programs which meet the needs of a non-white population might need to be developed or expanded;

e. That new programs involving the production and distribution of knowledge might need to be developed or expanded;

f. That new programs to help people become self-employed might need to be developed or expanded;

g. That the technological curricula might need to be humanized;

h. That more options, both in curricular offerings and in methods of delivery, might be demanded by students;

i. That programs which help students evolve toward a new ethic of commitment, e.g., a local "Peace Corps" program, might need to be developed;

j. That staff development in the use of two-way television for instruction might need to take place;

k. That basic skills for those who have English as their second language might increase in demand;

l. That people in business and the professions might need to learn new skills in long-term planning;

m. That financial aid to students might decrease and tuition increase as more students are able to assume a larger share of the costs of community college education;

n. That students might demand a variety of registration options, e.g., registration by mail, 'phone, computer, or two-way television.

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PROJECTION OF CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS

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- Community and College Trends
- Enrollment Potential
- Major External and Internal Needs

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS BY PRIORITY NEED

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

FIVE YEAR ACTION STRATEGIES

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN, 1983-84

EVALUATION AND PLAN UPDATE

Memo

The Marin Community Colleges

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College of Marin
Indian Valley Colleges

DATE: April 4, 1983

TO: Master Plan Steering Committee*

FROM: Nancy Stetson

SUBJECT: Major National Trends

Attached is a draft of a chapter for the master plan on major national trends. They are meant to provide a broad and general context within which the other "Projection of Characteristics and Needs" components can be better understood for strategic planning purposes.

As you will see, I have made no attempt to develop implications for planning from the trends. This probably will be done in the planning assumptions chapter.

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cc: Superintendent Diamond
Brenda Roth

MAJOR NATIONAL TRENDS

The Marin Community College District has developed a projection of characteristics and needs in four areas: major national trends, community and District profile, enrollment potential, and major external and internal needs. The projection of major national trends was developed by reviewing the current national literature on trends.

The literature reviewed was selected from the Future Survey Index, a monthly abstract of books, articles, and reports concerning forecasts, trends, and ideas about the future. Each of the most recent twenty-four issues of the Index was reviewed. Four headings in the Table of Contents of the Index were judged to be most relevant for further review. Those headings were "Three Upbeat Overviews," "Social Trends," "General Societal Directions," and "General U.S. Directions." Books, articles, and reports which were listed under those four headings were tested for relevance according to five criteria: that the materials appeared to identify trends which were major, national in scope, likely to affect education, currently evident, and projected into the future.

By these criteria, six books, articles, and reports were reviewed, resulting in the identification of major national trends. The trends then were grouped into five major categories: demographic, economic, political, social, and technological projections. In most cases, these projections have implications for the projection of characteristics and needs in the other three areas. They are meant to provide a broad and general context within which the other three areas can be better understood for strategic planning purposes.

Demographic Projections Through the 1980s

1. There will be a new shift toward rural life-styles (2).
2. There will be a small increase in the 0-14 age groups, a drop in the 15-29 age group, a sharp increase in the group aged 30-44, a decline in numbers of persons aged 55-64, and a moderate increase in the number of elderly, aged 65 and over (5).
3. Mortality will continue to decline, reflecting the combined effects of changes in life style--improved diets, more exercise, less smoking, etc.--and increased access to medical screening and care (5).

4. Mean household size will decrease from 2.76 in 1980 to 2.47 in 1990, primarily due to fewer children under age 18 (5).
5. Eight to 10 percent of women now in their twenties will never marry (5).
6. Annual divorces will continue to rise during the 1980s (5).
7. By 1990, unmarried couples will constitute 7 percent of all couple households, up from 3.5 percent in 1981 (5).
8. The proportion of people changing households in a year may drop to 16-17 percent in the 1980s, slightly below the current American standard of 20 percent (5).
9. The population shift to the South and West will continue, but not accelerate as it did in the 1970s (5).
10. Most population-boom areas will still be related to resort-retirement growth, and suburbanization (5).
11. The net flow of migration from urban areas to small towns and rural areas will continue (5).
12. By 1990, Hispanics will comprise a significant minority of 10 percent of the population. Hispanics appear to want to preserve their own culture and language, rather than assimilating. Mexico's young adult population will double over the next twenty years, increasing the likelihood of immigration of Spanish-speaking people (5).
13. Immigration will have a major impact on U.S. population during the 1980s. Net immigration for the 1980s will range from three-quarters of a million to almost one million a year (5).

Demographic Projections Through the Year 2050

1. The U.S. will reach zero population growth in 2050, when population will reach a high of 309 million and then start to decline (4).
2. Because we can expect more rapid improvements in extending human life, the population of those persons 65 years of age and older will increase from 25.7 million in 1981--11.4% of the population--to 67.1 million in 2050--21.7% of the population (4).
3. The life expectancy for men will increase from 71 years of age in 1981 to 75 years of age in 2050 (4).
4. The life expectancy for women will increase from 78 years of age in 1981 to 83.6 years of age in 2050 (4).
5. The non-white population will increase from 14.4% in 1981 to 23% in 2050 (4).

Economic Projections Through the Year 2000

1. We can expect an 8% annual inflation rate to the year 2000, with interest

rates stabilizing at 11% (1).

2. We will not experience a depression. America is depression-proof, partly because of the ongoing computer revolution that exercises such tight controls on money supply (1).
3. Taxes will go down as stock prices go up and as America reindustrializes robot factories to raise productivity (1).
4. There will be fewer Americans living in poverty, as welfare reforms are made in the years ahead (1).
5. The energy crisis will be forgotten as we begin to generate nuclear electricity with fusion power (1).
6. The U.S. will continue to be the strongest and most stable country. Japanese influence will wane for lack of natural resources (1).
7. We are moving from an industrial society to an information society, where most occupations involve the production and distribution of knowledge (3).
8. We are moving from a national economy to an interdependent world economy (3).
9. We are moving from a short-term orientation of managers to long-term planning (3).
10. We are moving from centralization to decentralization in. . .business (3).
11. We are moving from institutional help to. . .self-employment (3).
12. We can expect vast changes in the future in how paid work and child care are organized (6).
13. At least until the latter half of the 1980s we should anticipate intense. . . economic stress (6).

Political Projections

1. The new conservatism in America probably will last until 1988 (1).
2. Like Sweden, the U.S. will set new policies over the next ten years: paternity leave for new fathers, government-paid catastrophic medical insurance, free university education on a scholarship performance basis, free universal day care for children matched with the requirement that every able-bodied person work, tougher laws on drunk driving, an emphasis on the rights of children, coed prison cells, and alien voting rights (1).
3. There will be no wars between the superpowers (1).
4. We are moving from centralization to decentralization in government. . . (3).
5. We are moving from representative democracy to participative democracy (3).

Social Projections

1. The majority of the population will be better off in the year 2000 than we are today; we'll feel better, look better, and live longer (1).

2. Today's parents expect to make fewer sacrifices for their children than parents did in the past, but they also demand less from their offspring in the form of future obligations than their parents demanded from them (6).
3. At least until the latter half of the 1980s we should anticipate intense social conflict. . .and confusion of signals in ethical changes (6).
4. There are now scraps and shreds of evidence, based on opinion surveys, that American culture--historically characterized by an ethic of self-denial and currently characterized by an ethic of self-fulfillment--is evolving toward a new ethic of commitment (6).
5. The 1980s are proving to be a rough decade. We are forced to live more practical lives and to pay more attention to gritty economic realities--jobs, homes, food bills, personal safety (6).
6. We are moving from forced technology to high tech/high touch, where a counterbalancing human response--high touch--follows the production of high technology, balancing our physical and spiritual reality (3).
7. We are moving from hierarchies to egalitarian networking for self-help and social change (3).
8. We are moving from living in the old industrial cities of the North to the newer cities of the South and West (3).
9. We are moving from either/or (chocolate or vanilla) to multiple options: a Baskin-Robbins society of at least 31 flavors (e.g., there are 752 different models of cars and trucks sold in the U.S.) (3).
10. We are moving from institutional help to self-help . . .(3).

Technological Projections Through the Year 2000

1. Cars will cost twice what they do today, but they will be half their present wei_ get twice the mileage, and last twice as long (1).
2. Much of the world will solve its water shortages by nuclear desalting plants and towing glaciers from the Arctic (1).
3. New technological advances will include: medicines that improve and restore memory and stave off senility, pills that cure fear of heights and fear of flying, a "nutlike" snack to keep teeth strong and free of cavities, a hormone for control of growth and memory, medicines to cure addiction to drugs and alcohol, many diseases cured by gene splicing, an artificial liver, and artificial blood (1).
4. We shall soon enter a checkless and cashless society, with teleshopping by two-way home television (1).
5. The Space Telescope will tell us if the cosmos will go on expanding forever--a heavy cosmological answer which may alter religious thought (1).

These fifty or so projections of major national trends were based on six books, articles, and reports. Citations of these materials follows, together with a short description of the methodology used by the authors in making the projections.

(1) Marvin Cetron and Thomas O'Toole's Encounters With the Future: A Forecast of Life into the 21st Century. New York: McGraw-Hill, May 1982. Trends were projected by analysis and synthesis of data and extensive use of computers at Forecasting International.

(2) Larry Long and Diane DeAre's "Repopulating the Countryside: A 1980 Census Trend," in Science, 217:1111-1116, September 17, 1982.

(3) John Naisbitt's Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives. New York: Warner Books, October 1982. Trends were projected by content analysis of 6000 local newspapers over the past 12 years. Megatrends were synthesized from this local data base, with special emphasis on the bellwether states of California, Florida, Washington, Colorado, and Connecticut.

(4) Robert Pear's "Population Drop Predicted in U.S.," in The New York Times, A19, November 9, 1982. Trends were projected from U.S. Bureau of the Census data.

(5) "U.S. Population: Where We Are; Where We're Going," in Population Bulletin, 37:2, June 1982. Trends were projected by a panel of experts.

(6) Daniel Yankelovich's "New Rules in American Life: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down," in Psychology Today, 15:4, 35-91, April 1981. Trends were projected from opinion surveys conducted over a period of 44 years by The Gallup Opinion Index; NORC/The University of Chicago; Institute for Social Research/University of Michigan; The Roper Organization; Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc; and Harris Survey.

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MAR 22 1985